

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15

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FM USMISSION USNATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3781

INFO USICA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USNMR SHAPE BE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 08311

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO MPOL

SUBJECT: DEPLOYMENT OF STABALLOY MUNITIONS: ALLIANCE

- BRIEFING AND PUBLIC ASPECT

REF: (A) STATE 221420 DTG 302352A AUG 78, (B) BONN 16042

DTG 011835Z SEPT 78, (C) STATE 227295 DTG 072353Z

SEPT 78, (D) BONN 16493 DTG 081846Z SEPT 78, (E)

STATE 229063 DTG 090139Z SEPT 78, (F) STATE 221419

DTG 302351 AUG 78, (G) STATE 224174 DTG 021903Z SEPT 78

1. WE SHARE WASHINGTON CONCERNS REF C THAT THE STABALLOY STORY MAY LEAK BEFORE WE HAVE A CHANCE TO PROPERLY PREPARE ALLIANCE MEMBERS. CONSIDERING INTERNAL MUSINGS IN LONDON AND BONN, WE BELIEVE STABALLOY IS SUFFICIENTLY VOLATILE ISSUE TO REQUIRE CAREFUL ADVANCE EXPLANATION WITHIN NATO. TO AVOID PLAYING "CATCH UP" WITH
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SPECULATIVE COMMENT FOLLOWING ANY LEAK, WE NOW CONSIDER IT ADVISABLE TO BRIEF LUNS NOW WITH MATERIAL DRAWN FROM REF A AND THE NATO IS AND POSSIBLY SELECTED DELEGATIONS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PRESS RELEASE IS OUT.

2. SHOULD THE STABALLOY SHIPMENT ARRIVE IN THE FRG AS SCHEDULED (REF D) WE BELIEVE THE LOW KEY PRESS RELEASE

SUGGESTED (REF F) IS ONLY FIRST STEP IN PROCESS TO DEFUSE POTENTIAL OF MEDIA DISTORTION. WITH PUBLIC RELEASE SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, WE BELIEVE THAT, BARRING A LEAK, THE FIRST SIGNS OF THE KIND OF PRESS REACTION WE CAN EXPECT, I.E., WHETHER LOW-KEY OR PROMINENT, OBJECTIVE OR SENSATIONAL, COULD APPEAR IN EUROPEAN SUNDAY PAPERS (THERE ARE ONLY A FEW ON THE CONTINENT). THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO APPEAR, HOWEVER, IN MONDAY OR TUESDAY EDITIONS NEXT WEEK. IN CASE MEDIA COVERAGE IS NEGATIVE OR INDICATES LIKELIHOOD OF A PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROBLEM, WE PLAN TO BE READY ON SHORT NOTICE TO GIVE A BACKGRDUND BRIEFING SEPTEMBER 18 OR 19 TO THE WIRE SERVICES AND KEY EUROPEAN PAPERS REPRESENTED IN BRUSSELS. WE WOULD USE THE CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE IN REF G AT THAT TIME, AND BEFORE THEN IF WE RECEIVE PRESS QUERIES. WE ALSO PLAN TO FAMILIARIZE NATO PRESS SPOKESMAN WITH IT ONCE SATURDAY RELEASE IS MADE.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON CONCURRENCE IN MISSION BRIEFING FOR LUNS, NATO IS, AND SELECTED DELEGATIONS, AND BACKGROUNDER FOR JOURNALISTS AS OUTLINED IN PARAS 1 AND 2. BENNETT

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